implementation of the order of Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT), Principal Bench, New Delhi, dated 7-1-1999, in O.A. No. 1206/93 and 1288/93—Shri Nagesh Singh and Dr. A.K. Belwal *Vs.* Union of India and others, three IES Officers belonging to SC/ST category were reverted from Senior Administrative Grade (SAG) with effect from 21-6-2001. Further, in compliance with the CAT order, the financial benefits given to them while working in the higher posts were not withdrawn and were protected as personal to them. The Hon'ble High Court, Delhi, however, stayed their reversion vide order dated 4-9-2001. Accordingly, in consultation with Department of Personnel & Training, all the three officers were placed on compulsory wait with effect from 21-6-2001 till a decision in the matter was available from the High Court, Delhi.

The Hon'ble High Court, Delhi vide its order dated 14-8-2002 has now remanded the case to the CAT to review its decision dated 7-1-1999, and the matter is currently sub-judice.

Economic Growth Rate

†4093. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that economic growth has slipped to 2.6 per cent during October-December, 2002;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what has been the rate of economic growth during January-March, 2003 and steps being taken to improve the rate of economic growth?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND RAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) to (c) As per the latest quarterly estimates of national income released by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the growth of real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at factor cost is estimated at 2.6 per cent during the third quarter (October-December) compared with 5.8 per cent in the second quarter of 2002-03. The lower growth rate during the third quarter of 2002-03 is mainly on account of an estimated negative growth rate of 7.9 per cent in the GDP from 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' sector due to the drought. The CSO has not, so far, released the estimates of GDP for the fourth quarter (January-March) of 2002-03.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The Union Budget for 2003-04 has proposed a number of initiatives such as promoting infrastructure development by leveraging public money through private sector participation, promoting private investment and measures aimed at fiscal consolidation. These initiatives are expected to have a positive influence on the growth of the economy.

New Rating System for Securities by GIC

4094. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the General Insurance Corporation (GIC) will devise an all new rating system for securities in consultation with Asian reinsurance companies of China, Japan, Korea etc;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for having the new rating system and the problems being faced in the existing system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND RAO VITHOBA ADSUL) : (a) and (b) As a follow up of the decisions taken in the third Summit of the Asian Reinsurers held in Mumbai in February, 2003, a Committee consisting of representatives from Japan, China, Korea, Malaysia and India was constituted by the Asian Reinsurers to examine their rating system. GIC on its own will not devise any new rating system.

(c) Most of the Asian Reinsurers including that from India are rated as "BB" (Marginal) by Standard & Poor's (S&P) as it does not give companies a rating higher than the sovereign rating. Since India has been rated "BB" by S&P, General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) has also been downgraded to BB (Marginal). Similar is the position of other Reinsurers in Asia. To overcome this problem and to increase the retention of business within Asian region, It was felt necessary by the Asian Reinsurers to explore the possibility of devising an "Asian Rating". This will result in utilizing the full capacity of the Asian Reinsurers and in optimum retention of business within the region.